WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857 DECEMBER 1981

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

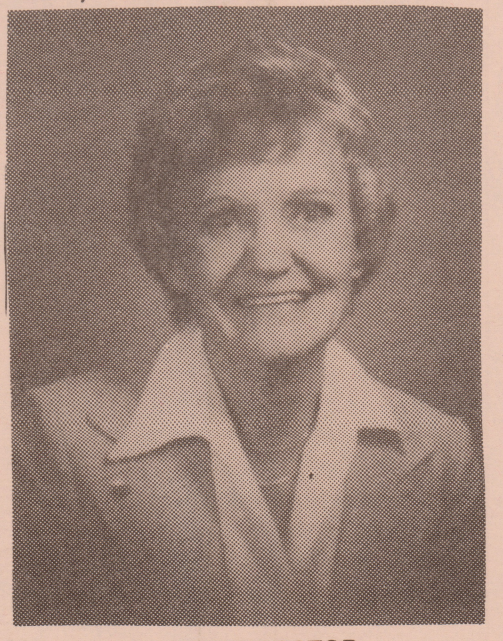
HAZEL PROCTOR, WCHS PAST PRESIDENT, MUSEUM CHAIRMAN TAKES JOB IN LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

Hazel Proctor, who has probably devoted more time, energy and resources to Washtenaw County Historical Society in the past eleven years than any other person, left Ann Arbor in mid-November to take an executive banking position in Lincoln, Nebraska.

She was WCHS president 1973--75, vice-president, treasurer and director but was most active in the effort to establish a museum.

At Great Lakes Federal Savings she was vice-president for marketing and public relations. Through her, GLFS also contributed a great deal to the Society. She was recently honored by the Historical Society of Michigan for her pictorial histories of several communities in ten books published by GLFS. A revised Ann Arbor book has just been completed.

She will be senior vice-president and marketing director for American Charter Federal Savings with 41 offices in Nebraska. Her husband, Donald J. Proctor, history professor at the U-M Dearborn campus, plans to join her there later.



HAZEL PROCTOR

COUNTRY CHRISTMAS SET AT COBBLESTONE FARM

Cobblestone Farm's Country Christmas will be noon to 4 p.m. Sundays, December 6 & 13 at the farm, 2781 Packard Road, Ann Arbor.

Slauson Intermediate School string quartet will play the 6th, Michael Malley Singers and Sacred Harp Singers will sing the 13th. There will be displays of detailed antique locomotive models and Margaret Smith's antique dolls.

Visitors may warm their hands over the "two hole" stove in the newly refurbished back-wing dining room as they look over the gift shop there. Various Girl Scout groups will decorate the parlor tree, make a gingerbread house to raffle and assist association members in telling the history of the house to visitors.

FORMER WCHS DIRECTOR LINDA EBERBACH PASSES

Linda Eberbach, a retired teacher and former Washtenaw County Historical Society museum committee chairman, director and life member, died November 7 at age 87.

She was a granddaughter of Christian Eberbach, pioneer pharmacist in Ann Arbor. He came from Germany in 1839 and established his own business in 1843 which continued in existence for well over a hundred years.

Her father, Ottmar, expanded the drug business to include manufacture of scientific instruments and apparatus. Her brother, Oscar, was a charter member of WCHS when it was reorganized in 1929.

COBBLESTONE DANCERS, FIDDLER, PIANISTS TO MAKE PARTY MERRY

Cobblestone Farm Country Dancers in costume will demonstrate 19th century dances at the Washtenaw County Historical Society "Merry Little Christmas" party at 8 p.m. Thursday, December 10, at the Salvation Army Citadel.

The dancers will step to the tunes of Vinnie Tufo, fiddler, and Debby Low, pianist, as they dance the Loomis Lancers quadrille, Lamplighter's Hornpipe and other dances. The program will also include George Washington's favorite dance.

Dr. John Henderson will play piano for audience singing. There will be punch and cookies.

1982 DUES PAYABLE NOW, PLEASE SEND TODAY

The WCHS board of directors recently voted to raise dues, establish a new sustaining membership category and, effective January 1, 1982, take in no new life members.

Regular membership will be $8 per person, $15 per couple. Senior citizen dues will be $6 per person and students, $2. Sustaining membership will be $50 per year.

Dues for 1982 are now payable to Ethelyn Morton, corresponding secretary, 2708 Brockman Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. (See stapled card.)

Those already life members will remain so. Many organizations now feel they can no longer afford to offer life memberships, the board was advised.

PHOTOCOPYING SESSION SET FOR JANUARY 28

Please start looking over your old photos of Washtenaw County people, places or things. WCHS will have Photographer Sam Breck on hand to copy them at the January 28 meeting for the Society archives.

HAGLERS FIND

$1 House No Bargain But Still Rewarding

A house that was built four years before Michigan became a state was saved from the wreckers in 1966 by the Charles V. Haglers who bought it for $1, restored it and now make it their home.

The Haglers told of the checkered history of the house and of their restoration at the October WCHS meeting. The talk was illustrated with before and after slides.

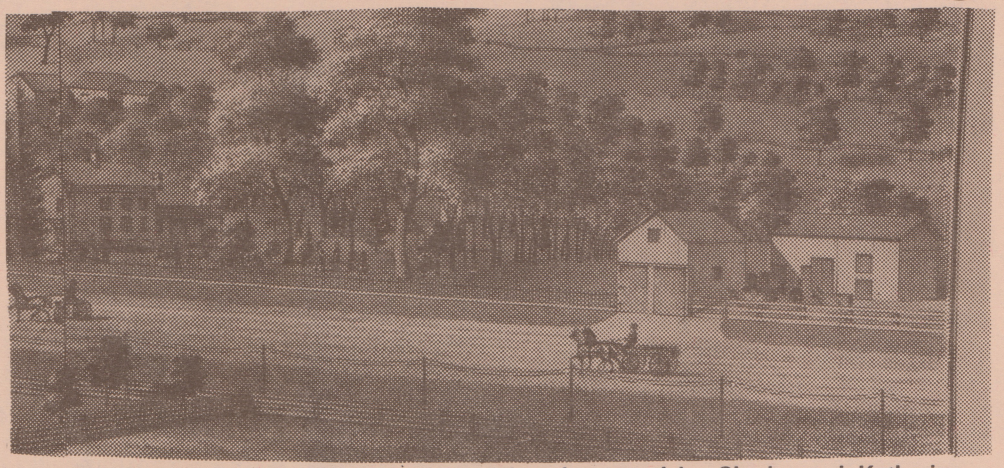
Ezra D. Lay from near Rochester, New York, was one of the many who moved to Michigan Territory from western New York. In 1832, he and his wife settled near Ypsilanti on 160 acres of land along Michigan Avenue, the old Chicago road.

He brought about 25,000 seedlings — fruit trees, grape vines, many kinds of shrubbery — and established a nursery there. In 1835 he added a greenhouse, the first in the Territory.

In 1833, he had built his house in a style reminiscent of those he left behind in New York state. The late Professor Emil Lorch, former head of the University of Michigan College of Architecture, considered the Lay house one of the finest examples of New York state Greek Revival architecture in the Middle West.

The Haglers are not sure when the house passed out of Lay family hands, but it was sometime after 1874 when it was pictured in the Washtenaw County Atlas.
sites but the house remained. It had been an Underground Railroad stop before the Civil War. Once it was used as a tavern. Sometime after the turn of the century it had been used as a house of prostitution, and during prohibition, as a blind pig.

Before World War II it was converted into several low-cost apartments. After the war, a returning veteran and his bride spent their honeymoon there and he launched his trenching business from there, using part of the house as an office, his wife told the Haglers at a previous lecture.



1833 Ezra D. Lay home, now moved and restored by Charles and Katherine Hagler, as it appeared in 1874 Washtenaw County Atlas. The road is Michigan Avenue just east of Ypsilanti.

In 1960 the Haglers had bought an 80-acre farm north of Ypsilanti and restored an existing 1865 house there. When they heard the Lay house would be demolished if not accepted by the Ypsilanti Historical Society for $1, they asked for a second refusal.

YHS was unable to take on the house and the Haglers got it. They shoveled out all the junk and had architectural drawings made showing original construction details and details of woodwork in a couple of rooms.

Moving it seven miles to their farm was the next problem. This seemed like a big deal until Mrs. Hagler, who is curator of fine furniture at Greenfield Village, ran across this quote about Newport, Rhode Island in a 1780 Revolutionary journal of Baron Ludwig von Closen:

"A frequent practice that would seem rather extraordinary to those who have not seen it is that of transporting the wooden houses that are built on stone foundations completely intact from one quarter to another and even into the country. The framework, just as it is, is placed onto wagons attached to each other. I have seen some drawn by 30 or 40 oxen or horses."

Frances Trollope "a very critical English woman who made a grand tour of the United States in 1828," also remarked about seeing houses moved in Cincinnati.

The Haglers didn't have to use oxen or horses but they had to contend with overhead lines. Detroit Edison and Bell Telephone estimates for line involvement alone totaled $12,800 but a mover who had special techniques for getting under some lines without cutting them moved it for $8,500, $3,500 of it for line work.

Front and back sections of the 67 by 26 foot structure were originally pegged together. They were pulled apart and moved in two sections.

The front section moved out onto the highway at 10 a.m. February 6, 1966. The route cut across a schoolyard, disrupting classes for about an hour. Culverts, bridges, mailboxes, road banks and overhanging branches all presented obstacles. "I think we replaced about two dozen mailboxes," he said.

The mover got under lines with a flexible pole extending horizontally from the roof peak. The pole would go under some lines and the movers could help the lines across the roof. In other cases, low hanging lines had to be cut. The mover's crews immediately repaired them. By 4:30 p.m. the front part of the house got to the farm.

The move was big news. It made the wire services and appeared in many Michigan newspapers and even in the *New York Times* and *Grit.*

Hagler, who has just retired from General Motors public relations department, related that after "Bunky" Knudsen, then at GM, saw the *Detroit Free Press,* he said, "Hagler, we spend millions of dollars and we only get three inches on the back page. You spend a $1 and you get the second front page."

With some difficulty they found a mason to put in the basement in late winter. He did good work but charged them $12,000, about twice as much as they thought he should have. They did not attempt to replace the original fieldstone foundation but faced the exposed foundation with faded red brick.

A year later, the basement and windows were in, the porch columns, put inside the house for the move, were back in place and the Haglers "were suffering from acute financial malnutrition." (They've given the talk about 100 times and they sometimes title it: "A Dollar House Is No Bargain".

They felt fortunate to get a carpenter who had helped them with the first farm house. He got a crew of about ten who got more enthusiastic as it progressed.

Scaffolding was built and the carpenters replaced molding and siding as necessary, painting as they went along. The house and a new five-car garage took 50 gallons of paint. They had located a mill house in Detroit to duplicate original molding which had to be replaced on the frieze and cornice. The head carpenter, Gus, would spend hours matching and fitting, Hagler said.

The Haglers had an architect design their new breezeway and garage to match the style of the house. Whenever possible, they used architectural fragments of the period of the house. The garage has a fan window from New England. Frieze work and pilasters on the garage are the same as on the house except on a smaller scale. Because they felt isolated from fire protection they put a new asphalt roof on house and garage.

"Recognizing that we cannot live in the early 19th century manner, we added central heating, air conditioning, indoor plumbing, telephone and television," Cotty Hagler said. "Remember too that we had no intention of establishing a museum," she added.

She then conducted a before-and-after slide tour of the house, which blends 18th century American furniture they owned previously with some empire and painted pieces and reproductions in keeping with the 1833 period of the house.

After the move, vandals had kicked out the few remaining stairway spindles. A neighbor found a spindle about a mile down the road which was used as a pattern for replacements.

While exterior siding could have been removed to insulate, the Haglers decided to do it from the inside and removed plaster and lath. Numerous coats of paint were removed from the woodwork. It had to be patched in some places and replaced where an apartment door had been cut.

Ezra D. Lay, who built the Haglers' house, was president of the Washtenaw County Pioneer Society in 1880–81 when the *Washtenaw County History* was published under Society auspices. WCHS is the legal successor of the Pioneer Society.

"Old houses are full of surprises," she said. They uncovered in the dining room a door with woodwork intact and a fireplace without a mantel. They found period mantels for it and another fireplace uncovered in the old kitchen, now their sitting room. They found a newel post from the old Rawsonville tavern for the basement stairs and a period architectural Ohio corner cupboard for the breakfast room.

The carpenter copied the cupboard molding for the door and window frames and they found room for a couple of much needed closets in the breakfast room.

Cotty Hagler "insisted upon a workable kitchen, well-lighted with sufficient storage space" and feels she achieved it. The room is decorated with duck decoys and shorebirds, part of several different types of collections displayed around the house.

Upstairs is a master bedroom, a sitting room and a large guest bedroom made by removing a partition. In the guest bedroom which has no attic above it, beams were deliberately left exposed to show the original pegged and mortise and tenon construction.

In the front hall they wanted black and white squares in a diamond pattern which is correct for the period. The painter first painted the floor white, then painted the black squares on top. But with traffic the black quickly wore through to the white. They think it will have to be redone. They wonder if more coats of polyurethane on top would have prevented the wearing.

The stair steps are black and Mrs. Hagler wanted the risers "properly marbleized". The painter applied the marbled effect freehand in blacks and grays on white and thought it looked like contact paper.

"He's right," she said. "My only comment is that would have been a lot cheaper, but not quite as authentic."

Bathrooms are papered in empire strips suitable to the period. The downstairs room is a combination powder room and laundry. While they still have projects they want to do such as stencilling the guest room walls, the restoration is mainly completed.

For such a project to succeed, they emphasize that "it requires a deep interest and commitment of both parties." When one of them got discouraged, the other would encourage him. They believe that they have restored the house not just for themselves but for future generations.

They are also involved in restoring two 1870 brick Victorian gothic houses in downtown Detroit which they bought in 1974 to save them from demolition and possibly to inspire others to restore nearby houses.

Hagler showed slides of the two houses, one built in 1872 by a Detroit lawyer which has since been sold. The present owner is a young man who is continuing to restore it.

U-M TOWING TANK

Where Naval Architects Make Waves

In Ann Arbor, 700 miles from the nearest ocean, two thirds of the new professionally educated naval architects and marine engineers in the United States are graduated each year.

Deep in the heart of the Great Lakes area, whose seamen are scorned by "old salts" as "bathtub sailors", is the training ground of those who will design some of the great salt and fresh water ships.

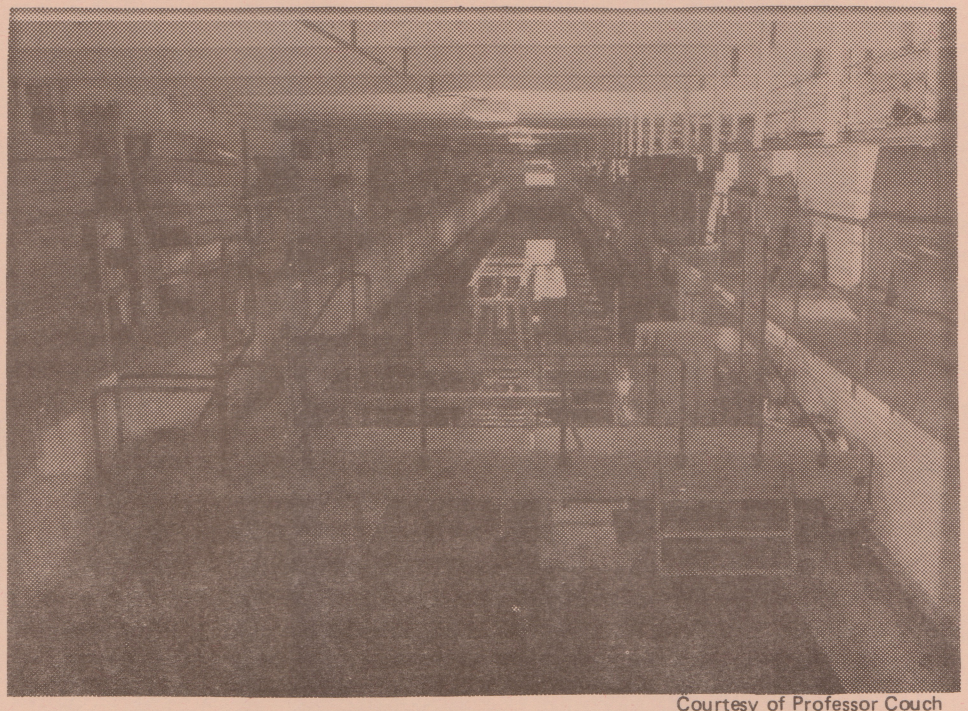
How did that happen? It's a story that goes back a century to a young navy man named Mortimer E. Cooley who was sent to the University of Michigan in 1881 to teach steam engineering and iron shipbuilding.

An outgrowth of his coming was the department of naval architecture, not to mention the upgrading of engineering from a minor branch of the College of Literature, Science and the Arts to a separate college of which he served as the first dean. (The U-M celebrated a century of naval architecture training this fall.)

In 1900, Cooley enlisted a young professor of naval architecture (from Glasgow, Scotland) named Herbert C. Sadler. In 1903, Sadler supervised the design and construction of the naval tank in the new West Engineering Building then under construction. It was the first college owned towing tank in the world.

The towing tank is still in use to test the seaworthiness of ship models and WCHS was given a rare opportunity to visit it at the November meeting. Unfortunately, a switch blew out the night before the meeting and the towing carriage could not be operated. Repairs might have to come from Germany where the equipment was made.

Professors Richard B. Couch and Armin W. Troesch led tours of the tank and related shops after introductory movies. Troesch succeeded Couch as director of the Ship Hydrodynamics Laboratory in 1980. Couch remains active in research and consulting.



Courtesy of Professor Couch

U-M naval towing tank as it appears today. It was the first college owned tank in the world when it was built in the West Engineering Building in 1904.

Professor Couch said there are about 250 towing tanks in the world, some much larger than the U-M's. He and his wife, Frances, who is WCHS vice-president, recently visited the 4,000 foot long tank in Leningrad which is more than ten times as long as the U-M's. Others are in Japan, England, Holland, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Korea.

Dr. Troesch showed a videotape about the U-M tank and a movie about the large Netherlands Ship Model Basin. The U-M tank is 360 feet long, 21 feet wide and 12 feet deep. A towing carriage over it rides on rails the length of the basin and provides platforms for various heights of equipment needed for experiments.

The first experiment used a two-piece model of a Great Lakes ore carrier connected with a hinge to test the bending forces on the vessel due to wave action. A load cell measured the force at the hinge.

An hydraulically operated wave maker is used to generate waves with a known height and period. As the model encounters the waves, a computer samples the wave height, period and bending force and calculations are performed and shown on video display screens and printouts.

In a flow study, tufts were glued on a tugboat model and it was towed down the tank at various speeds. Alignment of the tufts indicated the direction of water flow.

A directional stability test was next. When a barge is towed by a tugboat it has a natural tendency to sway back and forth at the end of a towing hawser. Since the amount of control the tug has over the barge is important this test is one of the most frequently performed, tape narrator Rick Ashcroft said. The test showed a need for modification of the model to increase the damping or resistance to sway.

The tank was recently used for life jacket tests. Male and female volunteers of various heights and weights wore different types of life jackets. Waves were generated and motion of the subjects observed.

Recently the tank has been used to determine maximum survival conditions for a new class of off-

shore oil production platforms. The model oil rig capsized in the face of the combined force in model scale of 100 mile per hour winds and 90 foot waves.

The large Holland facility was built in 1932 in Wageningen. More than 4,000 models had been tested there. Their models are made of paraffin wax, wood or glass reinforced plastic. U-M models used to be made of paraffin but now are usually wood.

Ship models, propelled by electrically driven screws, are tested under ideal conditions of no wind, no current, no waves to determine the most favorable shape of ship hulls and propellers.

The Holland facility has a shallow water model basin to test operation of ships in harbors, rivers and canals. Ice is often a problem in winter and harbor basin studies are carried out with artificial ice fields of paraffin wax. Build up on the bow of icebreakers was investigated.

They have also done intensive research there on a phenomenon in which vapor bubbles originating from locally occuring low pressures on the propeller blades implode. Those implosions can seriously damage ship screws besides causing undesirable noises and vibrations.

A GOLDFISH STORY

Before volunteers went into the U-M naval tank to test life jackets, Dr. Troesch "checked with the health people as to whether they would let us put bodies in the water," Professor Couch related.

"They said, 'You've got to put five gallons of chlorine in the water.' We did. The tank was filled with goldfish and they all died. Subsequently, we got some algal growth. We asked the health people what we could do about that. They said, 'Put some goldfish back in.' " They did and it worked.

The Holland basin has also tested offshore oil rigs, air cushion vehicles and speed boats. The latter were mainly studied for their behavior during planing which occurs at high speeds. The manned carriage in the high speed basin can go more than 30 knots an hour and the unmanned carriage more than 60 knots an hour. At maximum speed, the carriage has only four seconds for measurements.

Radio controlled ship models are used to study problems in approaching coasts and harbors. The facility also has a unique simulator on which ship officers can practice maneuvering several types of vessels.

The simulator has a completely equipped bridge from which the crew views a large circular screen on which all imaginable sailing situations can be projected. A computer translates all navigational activities into changes of view, giving the impression the ship is reacting. The simulator is useful in designing new harbors, drafting traffic rules for waterways and training crews. With ever increasing ship sizes, ever greater demands are made on crews.

There are large tankers sailing the oceans which because of deep draft cannot enter certain ports. This has led to development of open sea mooring facilities to enable offshore transfer. Possibilities of underwater oil storage are also being studied.

The editor was with Professor Couch's group as it toured the tank and the shops where there is measuring equipment, and wooden models and metal propellers and other equipment are made.

There were a variety of models perhaps six to ten feet long – old ones used for student instruction, a tanker, a fishing boat, the two-piece ore carrier referred to earlier, a recently tested amphibious armored personnel carrier for the Marine Corps put together with a putty that looked for all the world like mayonnaise and a canvas draped tuna boat model whose sponsor doesn't want its trade secrets let out. There was even a simple looking apparatus to measure wave energy for use in electricity.

Among the sleek modern propellers in the instrument shop was a paddlewheel made and tested in 1913. It was used again about ten years ago in testing for the Mississippi Queen now operating on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The captain of the Delta Queen came to see the tests, Professor Couch said.

Professor Couch said wave bending action "was not exactly what happened to the Edmund Fitzgerald" (Great Lakes ore carrier which went down in Lake Superior a few years ago).

He said most of the commercial testing of ships in the United States is now done in the U-M tank and about 90 percent of the testing there is for salt water ships.

Professor Couch was one of three arbitrators in a case between a Japanese shipbuilder and a Greek owner. When the ship was finished, the owner said it was no good. Actually he had no more use for it. Professor Couch spent one and a half years running back and forth to London and listened to 76 days of testimony. They found nothing wrong with the ship. The owner had to pay. The original cost was

AND THEY BOUGHT IT

Before the U-M's West Engineering Building was built in 1904 with its familiar arch over the "Diag", one of the selling points the naval architecture department used for justifying allotting a third or so of the building to a naval tank was that it would provide an auxiliary water supply for the Ann Arbor Fire Department, according to Dave Pollock, a WCHS past president. To his knowledge, it was used that way at least once about 50 years later for a minor non-U-M fire.

$50 million. He ended up paying $100 million including court costs and maintenance.

He in turn sold it to a Chinese in Hong Kong who cut it in two and added 80 meters to make it the longest ship in the world –560,000 tons and 1,504 feet long, longer than five football fields. It is now tied up off the coast of South America at Aruba as an oil storage ship for Exxon.

He is also involved in the Amoco-Cadiz case of the tanker which broke up on the French coast in 1978 spilling 200,000 tons of oil because of a steering gear failure. It had no auxiliary steering system. The French government is suing and he is involved on their side.

ANN ARBOR UNIVERSALISTS CONVERTED 'PILLAR' OF ANOTHER CHURCH AND THEIR STAR BURNED BRIGHTLY HERE ON CHRISTMAS EVE, 1837

On Christmas eve 1837 in Ann Arbor a good fraction of the people in the village and surrounding area — an estimated 600 — crowded into the Universalist meeting house and still others could not find room. (Even three years later, Ann Arbor's population was estimated at only 2,250.

"Our (meeting) house was very splendidly decorated with evergreen and brilliantly illuminated with sperm candles and intensely crowded," according to the diary of the Rev. Nathaniel Stacy, a Universalist minister in Ann Arbor from 1835--40.

Stacy's diaries and memoirs were acquired last summer in the east by Dr. John C. Dann for Clements Library. The diary will be in the Christmas exhibit at the library through December. (The library is open 9 a.m. to noon and 1--5 p.m. Monday through Friday.)

The star of Universalism burned brightly that Christmas but seemed to wane thereafter judging by Stacy's diary and the lack of any mention of Universalists in 1881 county history. Perhaps there are clues to why in some earlier events that earned Universalists a lot of attention in the community.

Two leading Universalists, Edward L. Fuller and Dwight Kellogg, local merchant partners, told Stacy of Deacon John Williams of Webster township whom they had known "from earliest recollection" back in New York state and whom they regarded highly "although in theory he was a bigoted Calvinistic Presbyterian".

Williams had been a church member from age 16 and "had uniformly holden the office of deacon or elder or both, for 30 years or more." They knew he "would be a strong pillar if converted yet the case was hopeless."

A few days later, Stacy met Williams in Fuller & Kellogg's store. Although Stacy was in a hurry trying to get settled, and half his furniture was still in Detroit, he took a half hour to talk. As Stacy was excusing himself, Deacon Williams said he long had two passages of scripture in mind that he "desired to hear some able discourse on."

Stacy asked time to prepare. In five weeks, he preached on the texts, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon. He also had set up a series of Sunday evening lectures on "controversial subjects such as were deemed by Partialists, insurmountable objections to Universal salvation."

The Deacon who lived eight miles away was there, "paid profound attention, stayed for the evening." The evening "discourse filled him with astonishment and he talked almost all night about it."

Later, Stacy wrote, "From a little conversation with him (Williams), I discovered that his Calvinism was a 'gone case' ". Williams was elected first deacon of the Universalist Church in Ann Arbor. "Never was a man's conversion more astonishing, save that of Saul of Tarsus."

Deacon Williams' wife and family, all good Presbyterians, were alarmed and thought him crazy. He admitted he gave them cause — for three months he "neither worked nor slept much, thinking about religion."

In the summer of 1837, Williams got "the Black Tongue. His tongue swelled so that it protruded from his mouth and he couldn't speak a word for several days or swallow anything but liquid." He, doctors, family and friends thought he would die. He made his will and settled his affairs. Then he got better, came back to the church and gave testimony, "Some opposers of Universalism say 'Universalism will do to live by; but it will not do to die by' but I know better, for I have tried it."

Williams then "went all about the country setting up meetings and then set up appointments" for Stacy. "The progress of Universalism alarmed the clergy of Partialist denominations whose 'slanders, denunciations and virulent condemnations were given behind pulpits and in private circles but not out where they could be answered.' "

At the March 1837 annual meeting, Fuller said, "I wish to have something done that will stop the mouths of gainsayers and silence the tongue of slander which is busy and loud against us from every quarter. I can not walk the streets without meeting some ridiculous assault from some ignorant blockhead on the subject of a doctrine which he knows nothing about."

The Society passed a resolution asking Stacy to invite the clergy of Ann Arbor to a "fair, Christian, amicable discussion." The resolution, offering the use of the Universalist Church if Stacy had a right to reply, was soon printed in both local papers, *The State Journal* and *Michigan Argus,* and addressed to Messrs. Beach (Presbyterian), Marks (Episcopal), Colclazer (Methodist) and Miller (Baptist).

"The clergy were quiet as pampered babes," Stacy wrote. "I was personally acquainted with all of them and occasionally passed a compliment with them; but not one word escaped their lips to me on this subject."

A couple months later, June 17, 1837, the Universalists inserted a second article saying "truth can never suffer by investigation and error and evil hateth the light." It announced a series of lectures. Stacy and the Universalists believed that "in time God will bring all of Adam's posterity to holiness and happiness immortal." This was directly opposed to the other churches who were trying to keep their flocks on the straight and narrow by threatening them with eternal damnation if they weren't good.

The other churches believed only part of humanity, the "good", would be saved, and considered Universalism immoral and licentious.

But the second Universalist challenge induced Episcopalian Marks to break the silence through

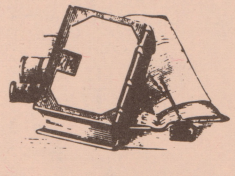
the newspapers. "From the formal manner in which the charge was got up, it would appear that downright theological murder of the clergy was intended."

If he (Stacy) "come in the character of a teacher to instruct the benighted ministers of Ann Arbor, I wish him to know I have made the writers of olden times my masters." Marks speaks of admiration for some members of the Universalist Society and invites Stacy to come to his church as a student.

Marks considered "Universalism more dangerous than Deism". He wrote a second article the following week which he concluded with an anecdote whose punch line was, "There is straight road to heaven — now if you have a mind to go through Hell to get to Heaven, you may, but I shall take the straight road."

Stacy replied in the July 25 papers, then heard no more. Marks thereafter crossed the street to avoid meeting Stacy. Stacy gave 30 lectures which were "well attended, frequently crowded." The lectures must still have been underway when Christmas 1837 came around.

Years later in 1881, John Williams provided much of the information on Webster township for the *Washtenaw County History.* Of his religion, it says only that in earlier days he had been a member of the Presbyterian Church. No mention is made of Universalism as if it were an embarrassment. In later years the Universalists joined with the Unitarians.



AUTOGRAPH BOOK GIVEN

An autograph book presented to Lizzie Cooper December 25, 1873, who seems to have been an Ann Arbor High School pupil then, has been given to WCHS by Mr. and Mrs. Howard E. Parr of Manchester. They found it at an auction.

FRED BISHOP, 90, REMEMBERS NOT-SO-GAY 90'S, DAY HE SHOOK WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN'S HAND

Professor Gerald Linderman's talk about "The Wizard of Oz" as political allegory (May 1981 *Impressions*) stirred vivid memories for our Chattanooga correspondent, Fred Bishop, a retired engineer, formerly of Ann Arbor.

Professor Linderman said, in effect, that the story isn't regarded as just a pleasant fairy tale for children anymore. Historians now see it as allegory dealing with the issues which came to a head in the Bryan versus McKinley campaign of 1896 — free silver and populism of hard-pressed Plains homesteaders. And Linderman believes "the gay 90's" are a myth.

Bishop who turned 90 last summer and can remember the 1890's agreed they weren't so gay and he also knew of the hardships his parents endured homesteading in South Dakota.

Both parents graduated from the U-M in 1877. His mother taught at the Liggett School in Detroit a couple of years before her marriage and "President Angell sent (Bishop's father) to be superintendent of schools in Lansing.

"After a couple of years, his health failed and doctors told him to work outside, if he wanted to live. He probably had a stomach ulcer which in those days was incurable."

Thus Bishop's parents with his grandfather and several uncles went to South Dakota. His parents took lumber for a small two-room frame house with them from Michigan. There was no plaster — "simply wood siding and sheathing. The only fuel available was wild hay which covered the plains and each settler had to cut and stack enough to last the winter.

"In a bad winter blizzard extremely fine bits of snow would sift right through the wall and drop as moisture on the floor. My father told me that it would sometimes be 20 degrees below zero right in the room where they slept. He would get out of bed and throw some pressed hay into the stove and there would be a red hot spot on the stove before he could get his clothes on.

"My two sisters were born in 1885 and 1887 and of course no doctor there, 15 miles from the hamlet of Huron where Hubert Humphrey would 70 years later operate a drug store.

"They stayed there seven years through drouth, dust storms, prairie fires, hail storms, tornadoes and other disasters and then everybody gave up and returned to civilization.

"My father worked as superintendent of several country saw mills in Wisconsin. It must have been a healthy start in life as all the Bishops lived past 80 years, my father 86 and mother 95."

Fred himself remembers "McKinley, Bryan and Teddy Roosevelt and the hard times of the 1890's and early 1900's. The effects of the panic of 1893 lasted a decade or more.

"When McKinley ran against Bryan on the free silver issue, all the school boys had small white caps with political insignia printed all over them representing the political affiliations of their fathers.

"I well remember the day McKinley was shot, a wound from which he died some days later. Many of the women in our neighborhood cried, which I thought a bit silly.

"Bryan ran against Teddy Roosevelt in 1908 and he made a speech in Ann Arbor down on the court house square. I, a 17-year-old high school lad, went down to hear him, to the disgust of my father, a Republican. There were several hundred attendants and everybody went forward and shook hands with Bryan, including me."

Longtime readers of *The Impressions* may recall another Fred Bishop escapade (May 1975 issue). It was Fred who audaciously raided the U-M Arboretum rose garden of hundreds of blooms in the wee hours before his Ann Arbor High graduation to decorate the hall. He

was abetted by his teacher and aided by a couple of classmates.

No one was the wiser, not even his father by whose window Fred had to sneak the horse and wagon.

LIKE GOLDEN SILENTS? THIS SOCIETY FOR YOU

Of the 502 films to be shown in Ann Arbor from September through December, 1981, by film societies only 17 are silent says Arthur Stephan who plans to launch the Ann Arbor Silent Film Society in January to try to raise that ratio.

Charter membership may be had by sending a $5 membership fee to Stephan at P.O. Box 2794, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. He plans monthly showings costing members $1 donations at the door, $2 for guests.

The first 50 charter members will receive a free copy of *Classics of the Silent Screen, A Pictorial Treasury* by Joe Franklin.

MULTI--ETHNIC HOLIDAY PARTY SET DECEMBER 11

Everyone is invited to the Ann Arbor Multi-Ethnic Alliance international holiday party 4--8 p.m. Friday, December 11, at Kempf House, 312 S. Division, Ann Arbor.

The group will decorate the house and provide holiday foods and music free of charge.

WCHS NETS $3,263

Proceeds of last July's WCHS Art Fair activities were even better than previously reported when everything was added in -- $3,263.

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS: OF WASSAIL, WICKER CRADLES, BLACKSMITH SHOPS

Chelsea Historical Society -- Election of officers, 7:30 p.m. Monday, December 14, at McKune Memorial Library.

Dexter Historical Society -- Regular meeting starting with 6:30 p.m. potluck dinner and tree trimming at museum, 3443 Inverness, Thursday, December 3.

Hand-woven wicker cradles will be among many handcrafted and home baked items at the annual Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m.--4 p.m., Saturday, December 5 at the museum. A Raggedy Ann and Andy doll set will be raffled.

"Fat Bob" Taylor will lead the outdoor Christmas Sing at the museum, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, December 19. Refreshments following, inside.

Manchester Historical Society -- No meeting in December. The society is taking steps to buy the former Don Schneider blacksmith shop east of the business section for a headquarters and museum. Former Governor John Swainson will head a fund drive next year.

Milan Historical Society --Election, 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 16, at Hack House, 775 County Street.

Saline Historical Society -- Christmas party, 3 p.m. Sunday, December 13, at Gothic Revival home of Harriet and Rolf Amsler. Show and tell of antique toys, holiday decorations and cards. Wassail and cookies. Readers wishing to attend please call Mrs. Amsler, 429--4383, for directions.

Webster Historical Society -- 7:45 p.m. Monday, December 7, at home of Mae Mast, Cottonwood Farm, 4580 Farrell Road. Attenders asked to bring a grab bag gift. Christmas cheer. Guests welcome.

Election of officers, 7:45 p.m. Monday, January 4, at Webster Community House. The Society has voted to move and restore the McMichael/Wheeler blacksmith and wagonmaker shop ca. 1840--1917 to Webster corners next spring.

A history of Webster township including the first published history of the Thomas/Lowe Cemetery on Valentine near Jennings Road will appear in the January *Family History Capers* of the county genealogy society.

Ypsilanti Historical Society -- Victorian Christmas, 2--5 p.m. Sunday, December 13, at museum, 220 North Huron. Emanuel Lutheran Children's Choir will sing. Refreshments. Period decoration of house by society, tree by Ypsilanti Garden Club.

The Sweet Adelines, female barbershop quartet, will sing at annual meeting 3--5 p.m. Sunday, January 17, at the museum.

Editor: Alice Ziegler, 663-8826
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WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING

8:00 p.m. THURSDAY DECEMBER 10, 1981

SALVATION ARMY

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